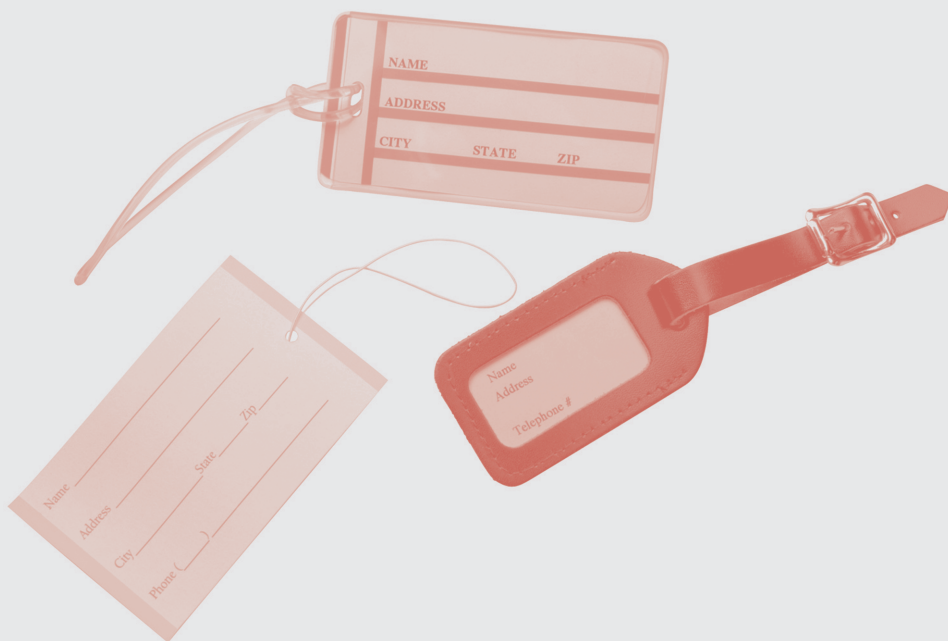
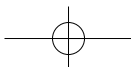
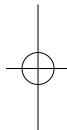
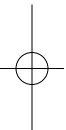
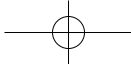


Section **1**

Contemporary Tourism Systems





Chapter 1

Contemporary tourism systems

Chapter objectives

After reading this chapter you will

- Understand the core elements in the service dimension of tourism
- Understand that the tourism experience does not exist independently of the interaction of tourism consumers and producers
- Recognize the different stages in the tourism system and their implication for the tourist experience
- Appreciate the importance of scale of analysis in studying tourism
- Identify some of the key constraints on tourism-related travel
- Understand the characteristics that are used to define concepts of tourism, tourist and mobility



Introduction

Contemporary tourism is at the same time one of the most significant yet misunderstood phenomenon in the world today. It is something that is engaged in by many people in the developed world and is regarded as an important mechanism for economic development not only in the industrialized countries but also in many developing countries. The extent of tourism activities across the globe and the sheer number of people who travel means that tourism is often described as one of the world's largest industries. Yet tourism is simultaneously an agent of cultural and change and a substantial contributor to environmental change, including at the level of global environmental change. Given the popular image of tourism as being connected to leisure and fun, the scope of the study of tourism is serious indeed.

This chapter examines some of the key concepts by which we analyse and describe contemporary tourism. These concepts lie at the core of the field of tourism studies and set out the domain of tourism research. Because tourism is essentially an experiential industry, that is people are consciously seeking to purchase particular experiences that are primarily ephemeral or intangible, tourism is regarded as a service industry. Therefore, the chapter first discusses the service dimension of tourism, a theme that pervades this book. This chapter then goes on to outline the concept of the tourism system and its implications with respect to understanding how tourism is consumed and produced, and approaches to defining tourism, tourist and mobility including some of the constraints on mobility.

The service dimension of tourism

The essential characteristics of services are that they cannot be produced without the agreement and cooperation of the consumer and that the outputs produced are not separate entities that exist independently of the producers or consumers (Hill 1999). One of the key service characteristics of tourism is that the main location at which the consumption of experiences occurs is outside of the home environment of the purchaser. Although tourism is a service industry this does not mean that it is completely intangible – far from it. Tourism is based on a complex set of infrastructure and physical resources that have a significant impact on the places in which



they are situated. However, what is being purchased by the tourist is the experiences provided by this infrastructure and set of resources, and not the infrastructure itself. Because tourism is an experience-based product it means that in order to be able to understand tourism phenomenon we need to be able to understand both its consumption and production. This is an almost deceptively simple statement but its implications are enormous: tourism cannot be understood by looking at one aspect in isolation, consumption cannot occur without production and vice versa. The inseparability of production and consumption is therefore one of the hallmarks of tourism with the value of the tourism experience therefore being determined by both the consumer and the producer of the experience and the tourism product (Figure 1.1). The inseparability of consumption and production also means that the factors that make up consumption and production are constantly feeding back on one another, thereby influencing the development of tourism products and their appeal to consumers.

In seeking to understand contemporary tourism we are therefore seeking to understand the interrelationships between consumers and producers and the variety of experiences that are created. Yet one of the distinguishing aspects of tourism from other service- and experience-based products is that it refers to the experience of people voluntarily travelling outside of their place of permanent residence. This therefore means that the primary focus of much of tourism is the places or destinations that people travel too in order to satisfy their motivations for particular experiences. The mobile nature of tourism provides another really important dimension in its understanding in that because the service and tourist experience does not exist independently of the direct interaction between consumers and

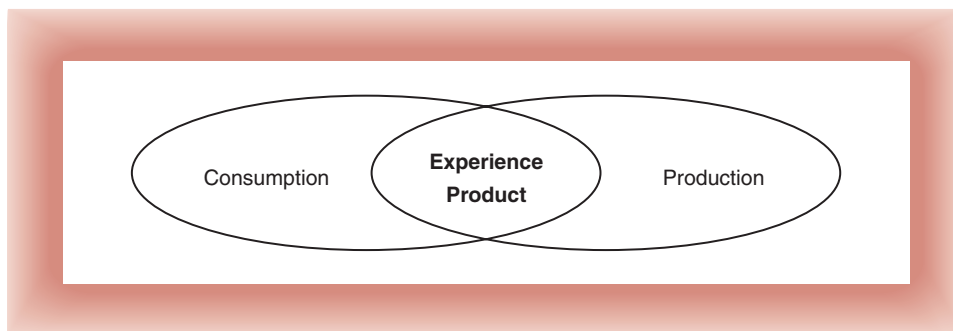


Figure 1.1 Locating the tourism experience and tourism product



producers, it therefore cannot be stocked or have its ownership transferred. In order to understand the tourist experience we therefore have to be able to chart how it changes over time in order to see how the different elements of consumption and production come together to produce different experiences and therefore different outcomes for the consumer and the producer.

The tourism system

In order to be able to understand the complex and dynamic nature of the contemporary tourism experience many tourism researchers utilize the concept of a tourism system. A system is an assemblage or interrelated combination of things or elements forming a unitary whole (Hall 2000). At its most basic, the tourism system consists of consumption and production and the experiences that are generated. In order to increase our understanding of tourism we are therefore also interested in identifying those elements and factors that contribute to tourism consumption and production.

Given that movement is integral to tourism one way in which the tourism system can be understood is through the travel paths taken by individual consumers. This approach is usually termed a geographical system of tourism and consists of four basic elements as follows:

- 1 A *generating* or *source region* – which is the permanent residence of the tourist and the place where the journey begins and ends.
- 2 A *transit route* – which is the path through the region across which the tourist must travel to reach his or her destination.
- 3 A *destination region* – the region which the tourist chooses to visit and which is a core element of tourism.
- 4 The *environment* – that surrounds the other three regions.

The geographical tourism system model is useful for identifying the flow of tourists from one location to another and the importance of connectivity between the generating region and the destination (Figure 1.2). Of course, there might be more than one destination and therefore a whole system of destination regions and transit route regions can exist for some tourists. Nevertheless, the basic form

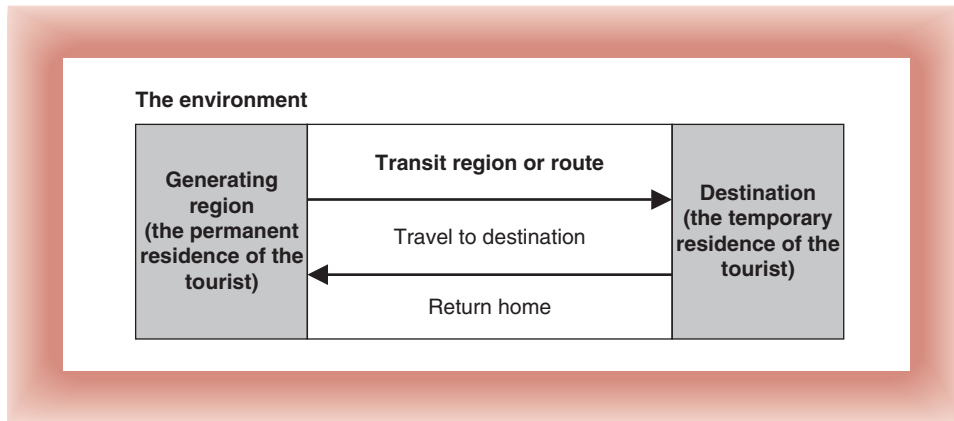


Figure 1.2 The geographical tourism system

of the geographical tourism system is sufficient to illustrate a range of important dimensions of tourism:

- 1 While the destination is the focal point of tourism activity, tourism will have affects over all elements of the tourism system. For example, while assessment of the economic and environmental affects of tourism can clearly be undertaken at the destination, a full assessment of impacts as a result of a tourist trip will need to include not only what happens at the destination but also in getting too and from that destination.
- 2 Destinations are accessible to tourism source regions. Such a statement may seem to be obvious yet its implications are profound. Different destinations will be variably accessible to source regions and vice versa. This means that some destinations will have natural advantages over others in relation to their accessibility and therefore potential market area. This is a factor that destinations will seek to exploit in competition with other destinations.
- 3 In relation to travel to the destination, different elements of the system will have different productive components even though they are used by the same consumer. The different elements that enable the production of tourism are identified in Table 1.1. In examining Table 1.1 it is important to realize that it does not suggest that the elements that have been identified only occur in specific regions, rather it highlights the relative importance of various aspects of the tourism industry from the perspective of the consumer as they go from one stage of their trip to another, and hence from one part of the tourism system to another.



Table 1.1 Main elements of tourism production at different components of the tourism geographical system

Generating region	Transit region	Destination
Distribution and promotion channels for the destination in the source region <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • travel agents • tour operators • online retailers and distributors Transport infrastructure	Transport links between the source region and the destination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • aviation services • bus and train services • cruise and ferry services • private and hire cars Transit facilities, i.e. food, accommodation, toilets where tourists have to stop prior to final destination	Facilities and attractions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accommodation • meetings and exhibitions • theme parks • casinos • retail • visitor centres • national parks • restaurants • activities • amenity resources Transport infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • local transport

CASE STUDY

The environmental impact of tourism in the Seychelles

The Seychelles is a republic of just over one hundred islands in the south-west Indian Ocean. Tourism is the second most important source of foreign exchange for the islands which has made the country one of the wealthiest in Africa. Because the environment is an extremely significant component of the attractiveness of the islands for tourism, particularly with respect to scuba diving, snorkeling and other water-based activities, the country has made extensive efforts with respect to land and marine conservation. Simultaneously, the Seychelles has also sought to expand its tourism market, particularly at the wealthier end of the visitor spectrum.

In order to ascertain the environmental impacts of tourism on the islands Gössling et al. (2002) undertook an ecological footprint analysis of the approximate 118 000 international leisure tourists who visited the country in 2000. Ecological footprint analysis estimates how much of the biophysical output of the earth is required to meet the resource consumption and waste absorption needs of an individual or a given community, region, state or continent (Rees 1992). Unlike other impact studies which occur just



at the destination, studies of the ecological footprint of tourism incorporates the travel of consumers to and from the destination thereby including all elements of the tourism system.

Gössling et al. (2002) reported that long-distance travel was the biggest contributor to the ecological footprint of tourism on the island with more than 97 per cent of the energy footprint being a result of air travel to and from the destination. Just as tellingly the authors extrapolated the footprint of a typical journey to the Seychelles (10.4 days) to 1 year and found that a single journey to the Seychelles required almost the same area as available per human being on a global scale.

Gössling et al.'s study of the ecological footprint of tourism in the Seychelles also found that although 'high-value tourists might generate the largest foreign exchange earnings per capita ...', they also seem to be characterized by the highest resource use per capita'. The authors' concluded, 'environmental conservation based on funds derived from long-distance tourism remains problematic and can at best be seen as a short-term solution to safeguard threatened ecosystems' (2002: 209). Such a conclusion therefore presents a significant challenge to not only our understanding of how to evaluate the environmental impacts of tourism but also how to manage such impacts. Although the suggestion by Gössling et al. (2002) that in order to reduce the environmental impacts of tourism there is a need to attract visitors from closer generating areas, the reality is that for many destinations, including the Seychelles, only a small market is locally accessible.

Key sources

- Gössling, S., Hansson, C.B., Hörstmeier, O. and Saggel, S. (2002). Ecological footprint analysis as a tool to assess tourism sustainability. *Ecological Economics* 43, 199–211.
- Gössling, S. and Hall, C.M. (2006). *Tourism and Global Environmental Change*. London: Routledge.
- Rees, W.E. (1992). Ecological footprints and appropriated carrying capacity: what urban economics leaves out. *Environment and Urbanisation* 4(2), 121–130.

Discussion questions

- 1 If the greatest environmental impacts of tourism occur in travelling to and from destinations how might the overall environmental impact best be reduced?
- 2 As a tourism manager, what initiatives could you undertake at the destination to reduce the environmental impact of tourism?
- 3 What affect might the imposition of a 'green tax' have on travel to destinations such as the Seychelles?



Because contemporary tourism experiences are simultaneously produced between the consumer and the producer another interesting dimension of the geographical tourism system model is that at each stage of the system the consumer will therefore be encountering different elements of the tourism industry. This therefore means that the tourist experience will be different not only from one region to another but also even within regions as different service encounters occur and different environments, sites and people are encountered. Importantly, each new experience of the tourist will be added to the previous sum of experiences therefore leading to new sets of understandings and expectations. The traveller is therefore constantly gaining new information as they travel through the tourism system which will not only influence the nature of the experience and decision-making processes in this trip, but significantly, in later trips as well. Tourist travel within the basic geographical tourist system can therefore be regarded as consisting of five stages in which different psychological elements regarding the consumption of tourism exist (Table 1.2):

- 1 Decision to travel
- 2 Travel to destination
- 3 Activities at destination
- 4 Travel from destination
- 5 Recollection of the trip and destination upon return to permanent residence.

Table 1.2 Key elements of consumer psychology at different components of the tourism geographical system

Generating region	Transit region	Destination
1 Travel decision-making and anticipation	2 Travel to the destination	3 Experiences at the destination
	4 Travel from the destination	
5 Recollection of the trip and destination experiences and influence on future tourism decision-making		



The different stages of the travel experience create a major issue for studying the behaviour and motivations of tourism consumers. This is because where a consumer is at different stages of their trip may lead to different responses with respect to the nature and quality of the tourism experience. Just as significantly, it highlights the importance of understanding the prior tourism experiences of a consumer when seeking to explain or predict future preferences, decisions and activities. An important concept here is to think of consumers having tourism careers in the same way that we think of personal careers in terms of employment and education. Our prior employment experiences and what we have learned in those positions influences future choice of employment. Similarly, our previous travel experiences when combined with new information sources assist us in determining where we may chose to travel to next. In fact, in some cases such as working holidays, our travel and employment careers may even be closely entwined, especially as international experiences come to be valued in an increasingly globalized economy and labour market. This perspective therefore means that in some cases when studying the consumption of tourism within the tourism system we may increase the scale of analysis from one that just focuses on a very specific part of one trip to one that may utilize a lifecourse or life-stage perspective and looks at several years or even decades of tourism consumption in order to understand tourism phenomenon. Of course, while such studies are possible they are actually very difficult to do. Nevertheless, the concept that prior tourism experiences influences future ones over the course of a lifetime is a very important element in seeking to understand tourism consumer behaviour.

If the nature of the tourism experience changes at different stages of the tourism system what does this mean for how we understand the tourism product. Can there even be such a thing? The answer is yes, but the complexity of the tourism experience given its constant co-creation means that it is extremely difficult for producers to be able to control the experiences that the consumer has with absolute certainty that it will meet the consumer's expectations including perceptions of value. A tourism product is a particular set of commodified tourism experiences. However, it is important to recognize that there is more than one form of tourism product and that these different forms of product are often consumed simultaneously as we discuss in Chapter 4. The different forms of product include:

- *The trip product:* This is the overall trip that a tourism consumer experiences including all firms, organizations and service moments from the initial decision



to purchase to the return home. In some cases, such products are the result of packages put together by travel agents. One way of reducing uncertainty for consumers and producers with respect to the quality of such trip products is to provide all-inclusive packages in which many elements of the trip are included. Where consumers have assembled their own itineraries, the trip product is one they have produced rather than one packaged by a retailer or agency. Such products and consequent arrangements of the tourism system are therefore more individualized than those provided by agencies and consequently more open to chance and surprise.

- *The destination product:* This is the sum of all experiences the tourist has at the destination as a result of encounters with firms, people, communities and the destination environment. The destination product is usually best identified through the marketing and promotion campaigns of destination marketing organizations (DMOs) which seek to commodify what the DMO identifies as being the key experiences that a destination can provide the consumer. A characteristic of the destination product that distinguishes it from the products of many other industries is that the DMO does not actually own the product that it is promoting. To a limited extent this also occurs with the offerings of some tourism firms, such as those that provide sightseeing opportunities, e.g. nevertheless, it is most pronounced at the destination level. We discuss the destination product in detail in Chapter 9.
- *The tourism business product:* This is the set of experiences provided by an individual firm or agency over different stages of the trip. In some cases, e.g. with respect to all-inclusive package holidays where the same firm owns or controls the core elements of the tourism system at each stage, the tourism business product may be virtually synonymous with the trip product. However, in the majority of cases the consumer is actually encountering a series of different business products one after the other. In order to provide quality assurance to consumers within destinations, many tourism firms will cooperate with each other so as to provide a more consistent standard of service and visitor experience.
- *The service product:* This is the individual sets of service encounters that the tourism consumer experiences through their trip and at the destination. The service product can be formal or informal in nature. The service product is formal when it is related to the experience production of tourism businesses. Each tourism business product actually consists of a series of service products, each of which is a service 'moment of truth' for the consumer and the producer. Informal

service products exist through the interaction of the consumer with people, communities and the environment at the destination outside of those provided by tourism businesses. Although such experiences are not the result of a formal tourism business they are nevertheless experiential products that exist within the product that is marketed and promoted by DMOs. We discuss the service product in more detail in Chapters 4 and 12.

The consumption of the various combinations of the different types of tourism product helps create the wide variety of tourist experiences that characterize destination, travel and operation offerings. The potential range of product combinations can help ensure that consumers find a variety of experiences that match their expectations and motivations. The challenge for the tourism industry of course is to find the right series of combinations for different sets of consumers, and this provides the foundation for much of what is contained in this book.

Another implication of our understanding of the tourism system is that it is constantly subject to change. Changes in one element in the either the production or consumption of tourism will affect other elements in the system. For example, changes in transport in the transit component will affect the relative connectivity between destinations and generating areas. Changes at a destination, such as the imposition of new visa requirements, may affect the relative attractiveness of a destination with respect to other potential destinations. Similarly, alterations in the perception of the relative safety of destinations for travellers will also affect tourist flows. In the case of an example of change at the generating area, the introduction of a new set of foreign exchange rates, may affect the flow of tourists to destinations on the basis of the relative favourability of exchange rates. Such a situation reinforces Mill and Morrison's observation that the tourism system 'is like a spider's web – touch one part of it and reverberations will be felt throughout' (1985: xix).

Who are the tourists?

Given the potential extent for change in the tourism system it becomes important that we can chart the patterns of consumption of tourism consumers. In order to do this we need a clear set of terminology. The term 'tourist' is the concept we use to describe those consumers who are engaged in voluntary temporary mobility in



relation to their home environment. Key concepts here are 'voluntary', 'temporary' and 'mobility'. If an individual is temporarily away from their home environment on an involuntary basis, e.g. as the result of a war, natural disaster or other crisis, they are usually termed 'refugees' or if, at worse they have been forced into cross-border labour or sexual slavery, then they may be referred to as 'trafficked persons'. If someone has moved from one location to another on a permanent basis then they are usually referred to as a migrant.

The concept of mobility in the context of tourism studies refers to the capacity of individuals to move from one location to another. In order to be able to do this individuals need to be able to overcome various factors that act as constraints on tourism-related mobility including:

- *Income*: People need sufficient disposable income to be able to engage in tourism once they have satisfied other basic needs.
- *Time*: There needs to be time available for travel, just as importantly the amount of time available will be a major determinant on how far people can travel and therefore influence their destination choice.
- *Political rights*: In order to be able to travel, particularly internationally, people need to have the political right to travel to particular destinations. Such rights are given by the nation state of both the generating region and the destination and are enabled through international law as well as systems of passports, visas and travel regulations.
- *Health*: Poor health, frailty or disability may constrain travel options.
- *Information and education*: Potential travellers need to have information in order to be able to access the tourism system and reach destinations.
- *Safety and security*: Concerns over the perceived level of safety and security will affect the selection of destinations and transport medium and may even influence the decision as to whether to travel at all. Safety factors include perceived threat of crime, political instability and health risks.
- *Family*: The requirement of looking after family members will influence travel decision-making, particularly for care-givers.
- *Legislated holidays*: The availability of officially legislated holidays will affect travel patterns. In the US, Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays are the two most significant in terms of the number of people who travel away from their home. Nevertheless, there are substantial variations between countries with respect to statutory leave requirements and public holidays. For example, Australia,

Netherlands and the UK have 20 days statutory leave days per year whereas France has 25 and China 10 (World Tourism Organization 1999; Hall 2005).

- *Work*: Even if there are legislated holidays individuals still need to feel that they are able to take holidays. Richards (1999), e.g. reported that two-thirds of respondents to a survey reported that reducing their working hours in order to engage in leisure and tourism was perceived to have a negative or very negative effect on their careers. In Japan there is even a term, *karashi*, that refers to death from overwork (Hall and Brown 2006).
- *Location*: The relative location of where someone lives on a permanent basis in relation to transport will be a constraining factor on his or her travel behaviour.
- *Gender*: Gender may act as a constraint on travel because of fears over personal security or cultural issues regarding the appropriateness of travel for members of certain genders.
- *Culture*: The situation of individuals in different cultures creates variations with respects to attitudes towards tourism, particularly when temporary movement away from home is associated with what are regarded as non-essential behaviours. The development of a consumer culture is therefore arguably one of the essential factors in influencing the growth of tourism.

Given the range of such constraints it should therefore come as little surprise that the majority of the world's population do not go on international or even long-distance holidays that are typically associated with tourism in the developed world. Yet even in developed countries there are significant proportions of the population that do not engage in long-distance holiday travel. In the UK this is estimated at around 20 to 30 per cent of the population (Hall and Brown 2006). In the case of the US, Hall (2005) used US national transportation survey data to illustrate the increase in long-distance trip generation associated with a rise in income. In the US, the trip generation rate almost triples when one transitions from the very low income group to a very high income group. Whereas 46 per cent of the lowest income group households made zero long-distance trips, just 17 per cent of the highest income group did so. Furthermore, income also influences the mode of travel. Lower income groups were much more likely to travel by road (either by car or bus) when compared to other income groups. The share of air travel also steadily increased in relation to rising income levels as does the distance of the average one-way trip, although no substantial differences were noticeable with respect to overall trip duration.



Despite the fact that many people do not travel there are also many who do. These are the people we usually refer to as tourists. However, there are substantial challenges with respect to the statistical analysis of tourists. Most importantly the need to define 'tourist' and 'tourism'. Principle features that need to be defined in a statistical or 'technical' approach to tourism include:

- *The purpose of travel*, e.g. the type of travel such as visiting friends and relations (VFR).
- *The time dimension* involved in the tourism visit, which may set minimum and maximum periods of time spent away from permanent residence and time spent at the destination.
- *Situations in which travellers may not be defined as tourists*, e.g. the voluntary nature of their travel, whether they are military or whether people are in transit from one location to another.

At the World Tourism Organization's (WTO) conference on tourism statistics held in 1991 tourism was defined as comprising 'the activities of a person travelling outside his or her usual environment for less than a specified period of time and whose main purpose of travel is other than exercise of an activity remunerated from the place visited', where 'usual environment' is intended to exclude trips within the areas of usual residence and also frequent and regular trips between the domicile and the workplace and other community trips of a routine character, where 'less than a specified period of time' is intended to exclude long-term migration, and 'exercise of an activity remunerated from the place visited' is intended to exclude only migration for temporary work (cited in Chadwick 1994: 66).

With respect to the definition of a tourist the WTO recommended that an international tourist be defined as: 'a visitor who travels to a country other than that in which he/she has his/her usual residence for at least one night but not more than 1 year, and whose main purpose of visit is other than the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the country visited'; and that an international excursionist (e.g. a cruise-ship visitor) or day-tripper should be defined as '[a] visitor residing in a country who travels the same day to a country other than which he/she has his/her usual environment for less than 24 hours without spending the night in the country visited and whose main purpose of visit is other than the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the country visited' (1991). In the case of a domestic tourist the travel time limit away from the home environment should be 'not more than 6 months' (WTO 1991; United Nations 1994).

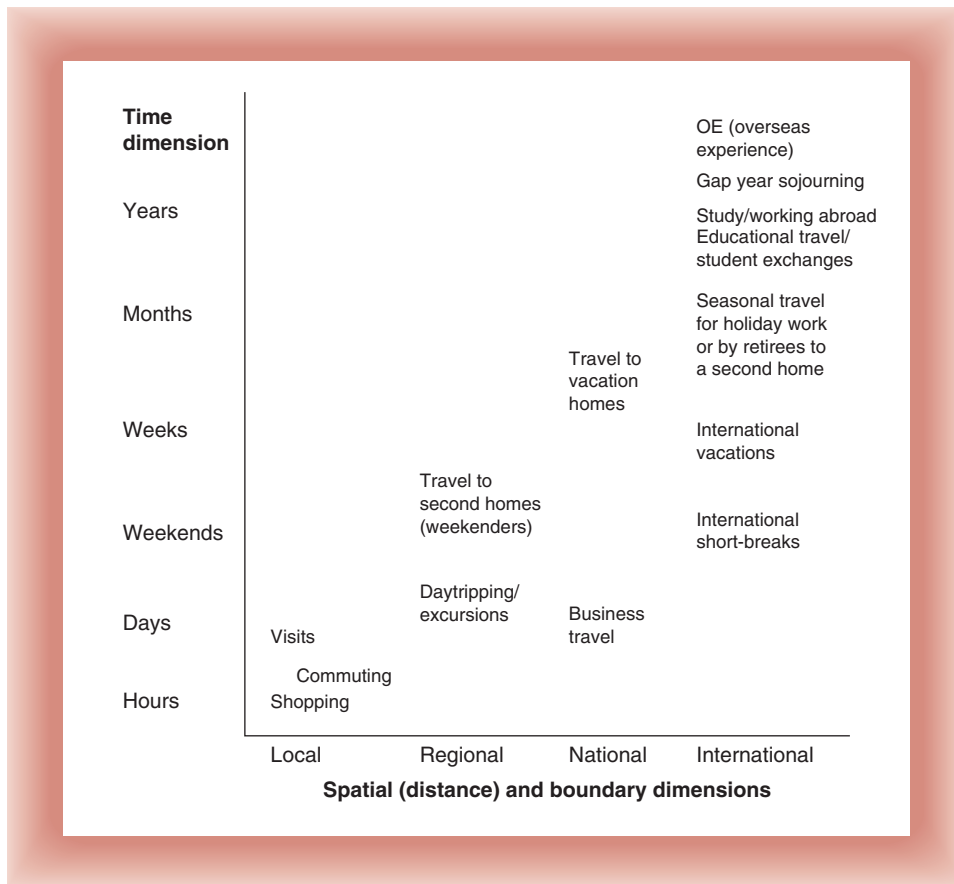


Figure 1.3 The characteristics of tourism in relation to time, distance, boundaries and description of purpose of travel (after Hall 2003)

Although the above guidelines are useful in thinking about tourism and measuring it statistically, there are significant variations between countries with respect to defining tourist activity as well as in collecting tourism data. Nevertheless, approaches to defining tourist and tourism rely on four different characteristics to define and hence measure activity (Figure 1.3):

- 1 *Time*, i.e. as discussed above how long someone is away from their place of permanent residence will affect their statistical and general description. For example, if undertaking a trip that does not require an overnight stay before returning the person would be classified as a day-tripper or excursionist. If undertaking an



extended trip, e.g. of over 12 months in some jurisdictions, a person may be classified as a migrant.

- 2 *Space* (distance), i.e. how far does a person travel before being classified as a tourist? In some jurisdictions a minimum travel distance is required before being classified as a tourist. Such an approach can differentiate tourism from localized leisure or other travel behaviour such as commuting.
- 3 *Boundary crossing*, i.e. crossing a national border can enable a person to be classified as an international tourist arrival and/or departure depending on where a person is in the tourism system. Boundaries are also significant for the development of domestic and regional tourism figures.
- 4 *Purpose of travel*, i.e. as noted above some purposes are deemed suitable for definition of a person while others are not, e.g. military and diplomatic travel is not classified for tourism purposes, although a wide range of other travel purposes, such as health and education can be. The identification of the range of purposes for travel and application to tourism is extremely important for the management of international travel flows through the provision of different visa requirements within national jurisdictions. However, the range of purposes are also significant as they reflect the development of new forms of tourism products such as medical tourism, health tourism, sport tourism, educational tourism, business and meetings tourism and VFR as well as more 'traditional' leisure tourism. Indeed, for many destinations leisure tourism may only be a minor purpose of travel. In addition, some trips will be characterized by multiple purposes of travel.

Contemporary perspectives

Although important for determining tourism and tourists from a technical perspective the elements identified in Figure 1.3 have also been argued as providing the basis for rethinking tourism as a form of temporary mobility. Coles et al. (2004, 2005) have argued that in order to understand voluntary temporary human movement or mobility, what we might refer to as a theoretically oriented concept of tourism, i.e. one that seeks to incorporate all dimensions of tourism phenomenon, an appropriate framework for tourism needs to be developed. This framework involves the relationships between tourism, leisure and other social practices and behaviours related to human mobility, e.g. retirement and amenity migration, second homes, sojourning, gap years and working holidays. Many of these forms

of mobility beyond a more traditional divide between tourism (temporary movement) and migration (permanent movement) have only recently become apparent yet they are an increasingly important part of what is studied in tourism and, just as importantly, what destinations and firms try and achieve with respect to promoting tourism.

One of the reasons why old barriers between different forms of human mobility, such as tourism and migration, have been severely eroded is that improvements in transport technology has made it easier for those with sufficient time and money to travel further and quicker than ever before. Travel which once took 2 or 3 days to accomplish may now be completed as a daytrip. In addition, advances in travel technology have also been matched by developments in communications and information technology allowing people to have greater access to the world as actual or potential destinations than ever before. Importantly, for many people in the developed world this means that tourism is now an everyday part of life and travel is something that they readily engage in and indeed, expect to engage in (Hall 2005). Simultaneously, and as one would expect from our knowledge that tourism consumption and production are inseparable, we have also witnessed an explosion in the number of places and firms that are seeking to attract the mobile, and an absolute expansion in the number of people who are mobile and the different types of tourism product they consume.

Approach of this book

A contemporary understanding of tourism requires the utilization of contemporary approaches. We have therefore drawn heavily upon other subject areas and disciplines to inform our chapters and understanding of contemporary tourism. In particular, we encourage readers to explore the literature on marketing, services and we point to the key references in our annotated reading lists. As a result of this wider perspective, this book utilizes an approach to managing, marketing and developing tourism that goes well beyond the 'popular' conception of tourism as holiday travel, as important as this form of tourism activity is, and instead embraces a broader understanding that sees such leisure-oriented holiday travel as part of a realm of voluntary temporary mobility (Figure 1.4) (Hall 2005, 2007). Such temporary movements of people for the consumption of tourism products and experiences are the focal point of this book. Importantly, this book takes a

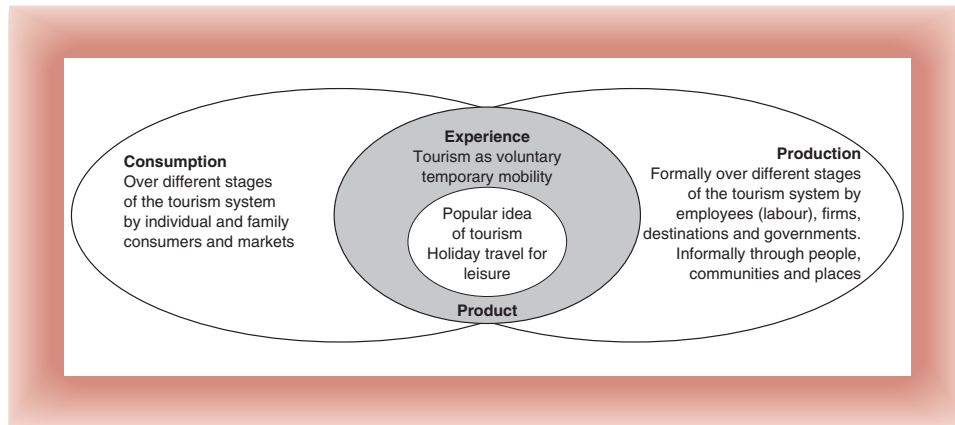


Figure 1.4 Understanding the nature of contemporary tourism

product-oriented approach that seeks to convey how products and experiences of tourists should be understood from the perspective of tourism firms and organizations in order that they can be best managed in order to reach satisfying outcomes for consumers, firms and destinations.

This book is divided into five key sections so as to reflect a contemporary approach to understanding the tourism system. This first section of this book outlines our approach to a contemporary tourism system and in Chapter 2 goes onto examine tourism products and markets. Chapter 2 shows how contemporary tourism products and markets are inextricably linked and draws upon marketing theory to help understand tourism products and market evolution.

The second section examines the contemporary tourist with respect to tourist behaviours and flows (Chapter 3) and contemporary tourism marketing (Chapter 4) where we draw heavily upon contemporary marketing theory to help understand contemporary tourism marketing.

The third section examines some of the key dimensions for understanding tourism destinations. Chapter 5 describes the various ways in which destinations are perceived by consumers and the consequences this has for tourism destinations. Most significantly, this chapter emphasizes that the destination is the sum of its component parts: attractions, resources, people and individual businesses. The majority of which are not under the direct control of any DMO. Chapter 6 discusses the key role of government in tourism destinations and the emerging role of governance strategies and tourism policy. Chapter 7 examines the consequences of

visitation to destinations while Chapter 8 looks at some of the responses to the implications of visitation via planning and management mechanisms that seek to achieve sustainable development objectives. Chapter 9 discusses the marketing of the contemporary tourism destination and identifies a range of contemporary issues facing destination marketers.

The fourth section on the contemporary tourism industry deals with various scales of analysis. It takes a contemporary approach that examines firstly, how we measure and assess the size of the industry and debates surrounding its component parts (Chapter 10). We then go on to identify a range of key issues facing the industry (Chapter 11). These issues include human resources, technology, globalization, networking, knowledge management and entrepreneurship. Chapter 12 looks at the importance of taking a service management approach to delivering and managing the tourist experience and draws heavily upon the services management literature as it applies to tourism.

The final section discusses key emerging issues in tourism and how these are affecting tourism futures. Such concerns include not only security issues but also the role of pro-poor tourism, environmental change and virtual tourism.

Chapter overview

This chapter has provided an account of some of the key conceptual issues by which we come to understand contemporary tourism. The chapter first identified tourism as a form of service industry. This was very important as it not only highlighted several of the characteristics of services but it also emphasized the key point that the consumption and production of tourism experiences and hence tourism product are inseparable. The one affects and informs the other. Some of the implications of this are then played out through the concept of the tourism system. The tourism system approach initially starts as a geographical approach but, as we have seen, then starts to have affects on how we understand the psychology of tourism and mobility, the different dimensions of tourism product and how they are simultaneously consumed by the tourist, as well as how the interaction of consumption and production are different over different stages of the system. This chapter then went on to consider how we define key concepts in tourism and how these then tie back in to our understandings of consumption and production and the importance of the product and the experience. Most significantly, the chapter



emphasized that a contemporary approach to tourism must look at all aspects of voluntary temporary mobility in order to be able to identify the potential full range of products and experiences that exist in contemporary tourism. We argue that such an approach will not only help us better understand contemporary tourism but also, by using the concepts, findings and strategies in this book, help increase returns to firms, destinations and the tourist.

Self-review questions

- 1 What are the distinguishing features of *services* as they apply to tourism?
- 2 Why is it difficult to discuss tourism *consumption* in isolation from *production*?
- 3 What are the five stages of a trip in relation to the *tourism system*? Discuss how the different stages of a trip might lead to different psychological dimensions of tourism.
- 4 What are the *constraints* that affect tourism? Discuss how such constraints affect your own travel decision-making and behaviours.
- 5 In seeking to understand tourism should more attention be given to the *immobility* of people?
- 6 Recall the four different *characteristics* that help define and hence study tourism activity.
- 7 Why have the concepts that describe *human mobility*, such as tourism and migration, become more closely connected in recent years?
- 8 How important are *time* and *space* in understanding tourism?
- 9 Are there differences in *popular* or public understandings of tourism and those of tourism researchers and managers?
- 10 Identify a particular environmental impact of tourism and review its relative importance in each component of the tourism system.

Recommended reading

- 1 Lew, A., Hall, C.M. and Williams, A.M. (eds) (2004). *A Companion to Tourism*. Oxford: Blackwell.
Provides a detailed collection of review chapters on key aspects of tourism, including issues associated with its definition.
- 2 Lennon, J. (ed.) (2003). *Tourism Statistics: International Perspectives and Current Issues*. London: Continuum.
An excellent overview of various issues associated with tourism statistics in a range of different national jurisdictions.

- 3 Hall, C.M. and Page, S. (2006). *The Geography of Tourism and Recreation: Space, Place and Environment*, 3rd edn. London: Routledge.
Chapter 2 provides a detailed account of issues associated with defining tourism demand and research on international and domestic tourism statistics.
- 4 Lovelock, C. and Gummesson, E. (2004). In search of a new paradigm and fresh perspectives. *Journal of Service Research* 7(1), 20–41.
Details some of the contemporary thinking with respect to understanding services and service marketing.
- 5 Coles, T., Hall, C.M. and Duval, D. (2005). Mobilising tourism: a post-disciplinary critique. *Tourism Recreation Research* 30(2), 31–41.
Discusses the significance of a mobilities based approach to tourism and its implications for key concepts.
- 6 Hall, C.M. (2005). *Tourism: Rethinking the Social Science of Mobility*. Harlow: Prentice-Hall.
Provides a more detailed extension of the mobilities approach and provides links into contemporary sociology, geography and regional development thinking in relation to tourism in both quantitative and qualitative terms.
- 7 Shaw, G. and Williams, A.M. (2004). *Tourism and Tourism Spaces*. London: Sage.
Discusses the connections between the consumption and production of tourism at an aggregate level.
- 8 Hall, D. and Brown, F. (2006). *Tourism and Welfare: Ethics, Responsibility and Sustained Well-Being*. Wallingford: CABI.
Provides an excellent account of the issues of participation and non-participation in tourism and how this relates to ethical and quality of life concerns.
- 9 Hall, C.M. and Williams, A.M. (eds) (2002). *Tourism and Migration: New Relationships Between Consumption and Production*. Dordrecht: Kluwer.
The various chapters in this book provide various examples of the connections between tourism and migration and how this may affect our understanding of what constitutes tourism.
- 10 Gössling, S. and Hall, C.M. (2006). *Tourism and Global Environmental Change*. London: Routledge.
Provides a challenging account of the implications of thinking about the impacts of tourism over all the stages of the tourism system and beyond.

Recommended web sites

Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA): www.pata.org
 United Nations World Tourism Organization: www.world-tourism.org
 World Travel and Tourism Council: www.wttc.org

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- World Tourism Organization (WTO) (1991). *Resolutions of International Conference on Travel and Tourism, Ottawa, Canada*. Madrid: World Tourism Organization.
- World Tourism Organization (1999). *Changes in Leisure Time*. Madrid: World Tourism Organization.